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The Aftermath of our CIVIL WAR presented opportunities to foreign investors which were fully appreciated by them.

Today—

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STANDARD & ISSUES

THE EFFECT OF STOCK DIVIDENDS ON STANDARD OIL PRICES

WE HAVE PREPARED A CIRCULAR NO. 1-N, GIVING A RECORD OF THE MARKET ACTION OVER A PERIOD OF YEARS OF STOCKS OF STANDARD OIL COMPANIES WHICH HAVE DECLARED STOCK DIVIDENDS.

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100 Del., Lack. & West. Co.

100 Detroit, Mackinac & Mar. Land

100 Empire Steel & Iron Co.

100 Franklin Ins. Co.

100 First National Bank

100 General Railing Co. & Pfd.

100 Great American Insurance

100 Great Northern Ins.

100 Hudson Co. Ins.

100 Industrial Finance Pfd.

100 Ingersoll-Rand Co.

100 Laclede Valley Coal Sales

100 Metal & Therm. Pfd.

100 McCarry Mfg. Co. & Pfd.

100 N. Y. State Ry. Co. & Pfd.

100 Niagara Ins. Co.

100 N. Y. State Ry. Co. & Pfd.

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FINANCIAL NEWS AND THE SITUATION

Seven Per Cent. Discount Rate Is Accepted Readily—What It Means.

LUXURY LOANS CURTAILED

Markets Are Composed and Exhibit Evidences of Basic Strength.

By WILLIAM JUSTUS BOIES.

The country is rapidly adjusting itself to a higher discount rate and honest surgery is being used to cut out luxury loans and those to support speculative undertakings. The process is orderly but insistent and will relax the strain on credits and enlarge the volume of accommodation available for constructive enterprise. The Reserve Board wisely has not attempted to define non-essential loans bankers free to determine their policies in accordance with the needs of their constituents. It is clear, however, that the campaign against frozen credits will not be permitted to curtail production or cause unnecessary hardship. The country needs to increase its industrial output ahead of everything else and provide funds to maintain agencies of production. But speculative borrowings must be reduced because they contribute many more million dollars of frozen credit than are represented by delayed merchandise shipments along the lines of way. Warehouses in almost every large city contain foodstuffs, provisions and merchandise held for higher prices. Even the carrying over last year's wheat crop at current prices represents tying up more than \$275,000,000.

Releasing Credit.

As that collateral is marketed, credits will be released for essential enterprises and commodity prices will be reduced to levels which will induce consumption. The net result will be beneficial to banks and their customers because the advancing price movement could not continue without injury to the country and increasing social unrest. Prof. Kemmerer has pointed out in the current Review of Bankers Statistics Corporation that in the six years from 1913 to 1919, the physical volume of business increased 9.6 per cent, the monetary circulation 71 per cent, and bank deposits 120 per cent. The cash reserve against those deposits declined from 11% per cent. in 1913 to less than 6% per cent. in 1919, taking in operation all of the banks and trust companies in the country. It is easy to see therefore that the upward price movement was fast reaching a point at which the credit structure would be imperiled and evils causing social unrest were increasing.

Less Tension.

With that liquidation, assets as it has been, have been impressed with the necessity of apportioning credit where it will serve best the community's interests. The naming of a 7 per cent. discount rate by the New York Reserve Bank means that the average borrower must pay 7 1/2 or 8 per cent. for accommodation. Even at those rates the banks will tend only for productive purposes, taking care to avoid speculative undertakings or loans sought for non-essential undertakings. The banks will be confronted a month hence with essential demands for harvesting funds, likely to be unusually heavy owing to a record outlay for wages and other expenses to which producers will be subject this year. The need is urgent because many Western banks have had to carry their customers over the year and cannot extend the facilities for the usual debt in July. Much of that demand will fall on the banks of New York, Philadelphia, Boston and other cities because the demand is urgent and must be provided first of all. New York banks are prepared to supply and to care for all necessary requirements, they are trying to strengthen their reserves and insure comfortable fall money market conditions.

Heavy Dividends.

Semi-annual dividends also are to be provided for towards the close of this month. They will probably exceed \$300,000,000, which, with \$250,000,000 of payments during June, will mean a total disbursement of \$550,000,000 for interest and dividends alone. These demands are unusually heavy, owing to large interest payments for Liberty bonds. In July is usually a season of important financing and because of the pressure for reconstruction loans, the probability is that the flotation next month will be exceptionally large. The situation is usually a season of important financing and because of the pressure for reconstruction loans, the probability is that the flotation next month will be exceptionally large. The situation is usually a season of important financing and because of the pressure for reconstruction loans, the probability is that the flotation next month will be exceptionally large.

Stock Market Response.

The stock market interpreted the sharp reduction in discount rate as calculated to strengthen the bank position and relieve the credit strain. The striking rise, however, provided a sufficient test, because had the announcement come at a time of feverish trading with broad public speculation, there might have been a sharp reaction with serious liquidation. As it was the market scarcely declined at all and after the news had been thoroughly digested there was a good advance, which showed that the market was well liquidated and that it had not been disturbed unduly by the news. There was furthermore a little change in money rates and, what was more important, slightly larger offerings of time accommodation.

The Street was not alarmed by the move and took a conservatively optimistic view of the future. It was thought that the advance only put the Reserve Bank rates on a level with the open market rates and with the Bank of England's minimum discount rate. The Kansas City Reserve Bank has changed some borrowers as high as 15 per cent. to redemptive paper, using the graduated system which imposes successive advances when the borrower exceeds his fixed line of credit. That action has been adopted by the Reserve banks of Dallas, St. Louis and Atlanta, but no other institutions so far have accepted it. Graduated rates are permitted by the amendment to the Federal Reserve act in cases in which the Reserve Board approves the change. A graduated charge is preferred by many on the ground that it is much fairer to penalize reckless borrowers by subjecting them to a higher rate than it is to announce a horizontal advance applying to conservative and reckless borrowers alike.

The Outlook.

The credit situation is being strengthened by the paying off of loans based on merchandise held up in the freight blockade. That contention is less serious than it was and, although conditions are far from ideal, merchandise shipments are being expedited with larger deliveries of material long held in the freight blockade. As those conditions are relieved the credit situation will improve, but assume thousands of bank loans have been extended to three times their normal life by non-delivery of freight and inability of borrowers to realize on valuable assets. The Interstate Commerce Commission last week urged representations to railroad managers instructing them to get busy at once with their own roads and see that the cars were not held up to sections short of equipment. Those orders are being carried out, and with more efficient use of rolling stock, the chances are that the roads will be able soon to move 1,000,000 tons of steel awaiting shipment from Pittsburgh and enormous aggregate tonnage of valuable freight in warehouses, storage yards and lost cars on railroad tracks. The carriers are still heavily short of men, but their forces are likely to be strengthened as soon as the wage increases shall be granted by the Central Labor Board, in session in Washington. Under the law rate increases cannot become effective until the end of the month. It is possible, however, that wages will be advanced before that time. If such increases be made rate increases large enough to cover losses sustained in the meantime will be necessary.

Relieving Blockade.

If the country can clear up its freight blockade and relieve the credit strain the business and the financial situations will be much better. Railroads have not sufficient rolling stock to take care of the country's growing business. The shortage is large enough to cause great inconvenience and financial losses to sections inadequately supplied with traffic facilities. That situation is clearly understood, and indications are that conditions will improve and the full financial strain be not as serious as many have feared it would be, in view of complications encountered.

High grade bonds still are available for near the year's lowest prices and Liberty bonds are obtainable at prices which ought to appeal strongly to discriminating investors. Notwithstanding conditions which prevail in the investment market and the worldwide strain on credit, there is no doubt that a United States Government bond will take its place ultimately as the world's premier security. Future generations will look back on prevailing conditions and wonder why an intelligent public could be so unskillful in the investment opportunity of several generations.

DRIVER-HARRIS ISSUES STOCK.

Company Puts Out \$750,000 of Its Preferred Stock.
The Driver-Harris Company of Harrison, N. J., manufacturer of electrical,

chemical and mechanical products, is offering a new issue of \$750,000 of 7 per cent. cumulative sinking fund preferred stock at \$98 a share, to net \$716 per cent.

The company has plants in the United States, England and Canada, and Frank L. Driver, its president, states that its total assets are not as serious as many have feared it would be, in view of complications encountered.

100 FAMILIES FLEE FIRE.

Flames Wreck Factory and Threaten Dances Tenement Houses.
A dozen tenement houses in First avenue, from Thirty-seventh to Thirty-eighth street, were threatened for more than two hours yesterday morning by a fire which destroyed the five story factory building of the National Leather Belt Company at 342 East Thirty-eighth street. Two fireboats helped a water tower fight the flames, which were fanned by a strong west wind.

More than a hundred families were ordered from their homes by the police. The damage was estimated at \$100,000.

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